

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-35 (Canceled)

36. (New) A system for providing data filtering from a cable modem termination system (CMTS) in a cable data network comprising:

the CMTS, wherein the CMTS comprises a packet counter, wherein the packet counter determines a number of packets sent to a subscriber device from the CMTS (herein, "downstream packets") and a number of packets originating from the subscriber device and sent to the CMTS (herein, "upstream packets"), and a data gateway agent; a datastore accessible to the data gateway agent for storing a data transfer rule selected by a subscriber, wherein the selected data transfer rule comprises filtering criteria selected by the subscriber, and

wherein the gateway agent comprises instructions that cause the CMTS to:

receive a packet prior to receipt of the packet by the packet counter;
access the data transfer rule stored in the datastore;
use the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule;
forward the packet to the packet counter for counting when the packet does not violate the data transfer rule;
send the subscriber device a notification message when the packet violates the data transfer rule, wherein the notification message comprises a prompt to override the data transfer rule;
receive a response from the subscriber device to the override prompt;
discard the packet when the response to the override prompt is to not override the data transfer rule; and
forward the packet to the packet counter for counting when the response to the override prompt is to override the data transfer rule.

37. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the filtering criteria comprise content criteria and the instruction to use the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises determining whether the packet comprises the content criteria.

38. (New) The system of claim 37, wherein the packet is an upstream packet and the content criteria are selected from the group consisting of subscriber personal information, a telephone number, a social security number, a driver's license number, a credit card number, and location information.

39. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the filtering criteria comprise time criteria and wherein the instruction to use the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises determining whether the packet is received at the CMTS during a preset time period.

40. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the filtering criteria comprise time criteria and packet type criteria and wherein the instruction to use the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises determining whether the packet is a packet of a particular type that is received at the CMTS during a preset time period.

41. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the filtering criteria comprise protocol criteria and the instruction to use the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises determining whether the packet received at the CMTS uses a particular protocol.

42. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the gateway agent further comprises instructions that cause the CMTS to:

- receive an upstream packet;
- create an entry in a connection database, wherein the entry in the connection database comprises an upstream packet identifier that identifies the upstream packet as originating from the subscriber device; and
- receive a downstream packet, wherein the filtering criteria comprises the upstream packet identifier, and wherein the instruction to use the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises determining whether the downstream packet comprises the upstream packet identifier..

43. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the CMTS further comprises a billing agent and wherein the billing agent is configured to receive a subscriber count trigger and to transmit a count message to the subscriber comprising a current packet count upon the receipt of the subscriber count trigger.

44. (New) The system of claim 43, wherein the subscriber count trigger is selected from the group consisting of an end of billing cycle, a receipt of a subscriber count request message, a subscriber count exceeding a subscriber selected trigger amount, and a subscriber count exceeding data over a cable carrier selected trigger amount.

45. (New) The system of claim 43 wherein the billing agent is further configured to automatically transmit an electronic message identifying current subscriber data transfer counts to the subscriber upon the occurrence of the subscriber count trigger.

46. (New) The system of claim 37, wherein the cable network is a hybrid fiber coaxial cable network.

47. (New) A method for providing data filtering from a cable modem termination system (CMTS) in a cable data network, wherein the CMTS comprises a packet counter, wherein the packet counter determines a number of packets sent to a subscriber device from the CMTS (herein, "downstream packets") and a number of packets originating from the subscriber device and sent to the CMTS (herein, "upstream packets"), and a data gateway agent, the method comprising:

receiving a packet prior to receipt of the packet by the packet counter;

accessing a data transfer rule selected by a subscriber stored in a datastore accessible to the data gateway agent, wherein the selected data transfer rule comprises filtering criteria selected by the subscriber, and

using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule;

forwarding the packet to the packet counter for counting when the packet does not violate the data transfer rule;

sending the subscriber device a notification message when the packet violates the data transfer rule, wherein the notification message comprises a prompt to override the data transfer rule;

receiving a response from the subscriber device to the override prompt;

discarding the packet when the response to the override prompt is to not override the data transfer rule; and

forwarding the packet to the packet counter for counting when the response to the override prompt is to override the data transfer rule.

48. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein the filtering criteria comprises content criteria and wherein using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet comprises the content criteria.

49. (New) The method of claim 48, wherein the packet is an upstream packet and the content criteria are selected from the group consisting of subscriber personal information, a telephone number, a social security number, a driver's license number, a credit card number, and location information.

50. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein the filtering criteria comprise time criteria and wherein using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet is received at the CMTS during a preset time period.

51. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein the filtering criteria comprise time criteria and packet type criteria and wherein using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet is a packet of a particular type that is received at the CMTS during a preset time period.

52. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein the filtering criteria comprises protocol criteria and wherein using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet received at the CMTS uses a particular protocol.

53. (New) The method of claim 47 further comprising:

receiving an upstream packet;

creating an entry into a connection database, wherein the entry in the connection database comprises an upstream packet identifier that identifies the upstream packet as originating from the subscriber device; and

receiving a downstream packet, and

wherein the filtering criteria comprises the upstream packet identifier, and wherein using the filtering criteria to determine whether the packet violates the data transfer rule comprises using the filtering criteria to determine whether the downstream packet comprises the upstream packet identifier.

54. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein the CMTS further comprises a billing agent and wherein the method further comprises configuring the billing agent to receive a subscriber count trigger and to transmit a count message to the subscriber comprising a current packet count upon the receipt of the subscriber count trigger.
55. (New) The method of claim 54, wherein the subscriber count trigger is selected from the group consisting of an end of billing cycle, a receipt of a subscriber count request message, a subscriber count exceeding a subscriber selected trigger amount, and a subscriber count exceeding data over a cable carrier selected trigger amount.
56. (New) The method of claim 54 further comprising configuring the billing agent to automatically transmit an electronic message identifying current subscriber data transfer counts to the subscriber upon the occurrence of the subscriber count trigger.
57. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein the cable network is a hybrid fiber coaxial cable network.